

RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAC)
FINAL MINUTES
July 10, 2003

BLM National Training Center
9828 North 31st Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: William Branan, Frances Werner, Lorraine Eiler, Mary Dahl, Lamar Smith, Bill Branan, Glenn Collins, Steve Saway, Sanford Cohen, Lee Aitken, Norm Wallen, Sandee McCullen

Hector Ruedas has resigned his position as an elected official on the RAC. A call for nominations is in for the RAC.

ABSENT: Lori Faeth, Rick Holloway, John Neal, Chris Newell

BLM STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Don Ellsworth, Elaine Zielinski, Roger Taylor, Gail Acheson, Ron Hooper, Deborah Stevens, Bill Coulloudon, Mike Taylor, Bill Grossi, Teri Raml, Bob Hall, Don Charpio, Shela McFarlin, Ken Mahoney, Bill Civish, Bob Price, Susan Williams

PRESENTERS & GUESTS: Jason Williams & Judith Shaw (Arizona Wilderness Coalition)

AGENDA ITEM: Call to Order (Frances Werner, RAC Chair)

DISCUSSION: The Chair called the meeting to order at the National Training Center at 9:30 a.m. Frances thanked everyone for attending and introductions were made of all participants.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Review of the May 7-8, 2003 meeting Minutes (Frances Werner, RAC Chair)

DISCUSSION: Norm Wallen (gelding not gilding). The intent was to raise the question on if this type of castration of males would work.

Deborah Stevens: We will have to follow up with Al Burch.

Steve Saway: On page 4 under discussion there is a comment by him “reminds me of BLM recreation” and meant to say, “it reminds me of BLM, OHV strategy and the listening meetings that were held for public comment.” On page 8 under discussion BLM selected the Sonoita Valley planning partnership as a good example of collaborative planning.

Frances Werner: Presenters, two wildlife managers were present along with Regional Supervisor for Arizona Game & Fish, Bob Price (Rick Langley & Garrett Fabian).

ACTION: Frances Werner motioned to accept the minutes. Seconded by Norm Wallen. Motion approved.

AGENDA ITEM: BLM State Director's Introduction, Update on Legislation, Regulations, and other Statewide Issues (Elaine Zielinski, BLM Arizona State Director and other BLM staff)

- **Welcome:** It's good to see everyone here in sunny Phoenix!
- **Arizona Resource Advisory Council Nominations:** The nomination package for this year's RAC call for nominations has been completed and sent to Washington for review and appointments by the Secretary. BLM received approximately 22 nominations for the five upcoming vacancies, along with one vacancy created by Hector Ruedas (Elected Official) resignation from the RAC in May. Mike Taylor and Deborah Stevens met with the Governor's staff (Lori Faeth and Dora Vasquez) to go over the BLM's recommendations last week. Appointments are expected in August.
- **Livestock Trespass and Arrest of Luther Wallace Klump:** A long-standing livestock trespass issue has been ongoing with the Klump family in southeastern Arizona since the 1980s. In 1993 the Interior Board of Land Appeals upheld BLM's decision canceling all grazing privileges of Luther Wallace Klump by reason of repeated willful trespass. The IBLA decision was upheld on appeal to the federal district court and the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The Klumps continued to refuse to remove trespass livestock and court actions continued to ensue over the years. On April 21, 2003, a hearing was held in the U.S. District Court in Tucson and both defendants (Wallace and his son Barry) were held to be in contempt. Luther Wallace Klump admitted that he was continuing to graze his livestock, and that he was prepared to spend a lifetime in jail, and that "if the government removed his cattle they will suffer the consequences." Mr. Klump was taken into confinement by U.S. Marshal's Office until such time as he complies with the court's order. Barry Klump appeared at a hearing on June 2, 2003, and provided a status of the removal of his livestock. He reported he is removing his cattle from the Badger Den and Simmons allotments. BLM also requested the court to impose a \$200/day sanction for non-removal of Barry Klump's cattle. The judge said he would consider it, but left the amount open for additional penalties. Another status hearing was held on July 7, 2003.

As for Wallace Klump, he still remains in prison (Florence, AZ), and has asked for an attorney to be appointed to him. He claims he is indigent. The government is going after other assets to make Wallace comply with removing his trespass cattle from the Badger Den and Simmons Peak allotments.

As of today, the sanctions are up to \$15,000, the court has received \$5,000 from a seized checking account. The trespass charges are up to \$90,714.38. Since the contempt sanctions will be the first to be paid to the court, BLM will probably never recover any trespass charges.

- **Southwest Strategy Update (SWS):** BLM hosted the Southwest Strategy Regional Executive Committee meeting on June 10 – 11 at the BLM National Training Center. Charters were finalized for the top three priorities: Forest Health/Fire, Water, and U.S. – Mexico Border issues. These Charters include the program of work, responsibilities and time frames for completion of key actions to accomplish the goals and establish performance expectations.

In addition, several members of the Regional Executive Committee went to Washington D.C. to conduct congressional and administration briefings. The briefings explained the history of the Southwest Strategy and highlighted the three focus areas - Forest Health/Fire, Water and U.S. – Mexico Border issues.

- **Sustaining Working Landscape “Initiative”:** Although Bill Coulloudon will cover this topic later in the agenda; I want to thank the RAC for the time and effort you will devote to the Sustaining Working Landscapes discussion. At the April meeting for the National RAC Meeting, the RAC chairs wanted the entire RAC to have an opportunity to review the draft policy and help BLM gather public comments. The timeline has been adjusted to allow the RAC’s to gather public comments and provide their recommendations based on those comments. I look forward to what the Arizona RAC will do to help develop these rangeland policies.
- **Recreational Shooting:** Target shooting is causing public safety issues and resource damage in several areas of Arizona. For BLM, the risks and impacts are increasing in the Ironwood Forest National Monument. However, with the rapidly increasing urban population throughout the Tucson Basin, and a shortage of locations where target shooters can pursue their sport safely, this problem is one faced by all federal, state and county agencies.

The BLM Tucson Field Office has awarded a conflict resolution contract to the Udall Center’s U.S. Institute for Conflict Resolution to build a strong partnership with the various stakeholders in the Tucson Basin and to define a common vision for the equitable solution to safe, clean recreational shooting, both in the interim and for the Ironwood Forest planning process. In order to seek viable alternatives, the process has been designed to be inclusive of the public and other agencies.

The BLM met with the Tonto National Forest, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department on June 16 to discuss ways to address the recreational target shooting issues facing both the Tucson and Phoenix Metropolitan areas. This topic is not new to the area or these agencies. In fact several years ago, the Tonto National Forest closed an 85,000-acre area, because of the safety issues, and the resource damage being caused by recreational shooters.

- **BLM Fire Situation, Dedicated Resources and Restrictions:** Arizona and most of the Southwest is entering into the fifth year of drought. Decades of fuel build up, exacerbated by beetle killed trees and encroaching wildland-urban interface, is adding to the widespread volatile fire situation, and is shared by the cooperating public land management agencies.

Approximately 2,859 acres of BLM public lands have been involved in 32 human-caused fires, and 10 acres have burned because of six lightning-caused fires. These numbers may change over the 4th of July weekend and the start of the monsoon season.

Currently, there are 41 Arizona BLM personnel assigned to fires in Arizona, along with staff working in their home units. Other resources devoted to fire include, 22 engines, 5 air tankers, and 5 fireboats.

As of July 1, 2003, all Arizona BLM lands are under fire restrictions – which means: no open campfires are allowed; pressurized fuel stoves, lanterns and heaters are permitted in most developed campgrounds only; smoking is permitted only in enclosed vehicles, buildings and areas cleared of all combustible materials; and fireworks continue to be against the law on all public lands in the state.

- **Feasibility Study:** Sally Wisely, BLM Utah State Director, and I have decided to initiate a study to examine the feasibility of consolidating the Arizona Strip and St. George Field Offices. Our goal is to achieve the maximum utilization of our resources—staff and budget—to successfully achieve our mission without regard to administrative boundaries. Through this study, we believe we can generate greater efficiencies and effectiveness by closer coordination and sharing resources.

A small task group has been formed to identify and analyze opportunities for sharing and streamlining operations. A report of the review will be completed by late summer. During this time, the group will work closely with each of the affected field offices to identify issues and opportunities to improve management. Every effort will be made to insure that the concerns, suggestions and thoughts of all employees are heard and taken into consideration.

- **2006 Budget Priorities:** I attended a National Budget Strategy Meeting two weeks ago in Washington. One item of interest is that BLM will be enlisting the RAC and the National Association of Counties (NACO) help in developing BLM's priorities for 2006. This request will be coming up in the next six months, when BLM begins its 2006 budget cycle. Washington will make contact with other national groups to get their input as well. This "early alert" will give the RACs an opportunity to decide how they may want to organize themselves. Twinkle Thompson will be coordinating this effort as the National RAC coordinator.

DISCUSSION:**Southwest Strategy**

Elaine Zielinski: We are reorganizing our folks to concentrate on these three areas. I am now the sponsor and we had a meeting and decided that the OHV group was doing some good stuff, but it wasn't in the three priority areas of the Southwest Strategy. The OHV group is going to operate with the RAC members involved in their group. They will have their own charter and a steering committee. They are working on their charter and a plan on how to obtain wider participation and utilize the existing groups.

Recreational Shooting

Sandee McCullen: Regarding the recreational shooting at Udall Center. How are they doing this? Are they having public meetings or surveys?

Mike Taylor: They are identifying the stakeholder. I believe they will use public meetings.

Sanford Cohen: is there a point of contact?

Mike Taylor: Shela McFarlin in Tucson

Elaine Zielinski: If you would like more information, we can certainly provide it to you.

Glenn Collins: Is the concern for safety on public lands?

Mike Taylor: Game & Fish is involved in taking the role of providing shooting ranges in the state. Working with the NRA on how much space is needed around the shooting range. You have some encroachment in Tucson, and they are looking for areas to provide buffering.

Elaine Zielinski: One of the issues mentioned in our discussion is that this has had an impact in the economic arena because Arizona has lost out on national shooting competitions because they don't have the facilities.

Mike Taylor: Tournaments bring a lot of money to the State.

ACTION:

***Elaine Zielinski:* We can provide you with the survey on what is out there, along with the needs and requirements. Arizona Game & Fish is using it (finalized).**

Fire

Elaine Zielinski: In June, I attended the Western Governor's Fire Conference in Missoula, Montana. There were not a lot of agreements made. I think there is a lot of energy and groups getting together and talking more. I think we will see positive things happen.

Feasibility Study

Roger Taylor: Both offices are doing combined projects now.

Elaine Zielinski: We are also looking at doing things with other agencies (particularly the Forest Service).

Glenn Collins: I hope you don't lose the Arizona Strip ambiance for Arizona.

Budget Priorities

Frances Werner: We need to have the RAC understand how the BLM budget is put together and this would be something that can be presented to the RAC.

Elaine Zielinski: They are starting to make shifts in budgets from state to state depending on performance. Certain states are spending the money, but don't have the outputs to show that some monies are starting to be shifted.

Frances Werner: I made copies of the minutes of the RAC meeting in Washington, D.C. This gives you a sense of what went on

Elaine Zielinski: John Christensen, Field Manager for the Kingman Field Office, is going to Washington, D.C. for a 120-day detail working on vegetative management. Don Charpio will be the acting field manager while John on detail.

Norm Wallen: Some of you may recall that six to eight months ago I asked for clarification of the authority and role of the RAC with regard to detailed investigation of specific user complaints. After talking with RAC members, I may be the only one that sees the need for the clarification. I personally feel it would be a mistake to become involved in these things.

AGENDA ITEM: “Sustaining Working Landscapes” Draft Policy Update (Bill Coulloudon, Rangeland Management Specialist)

Development Timeline for the Draft Sustaining Working Landscape Policy

A. Introduction:

- By July 15th the RAC will receive a working draft of the Sustaining Working Landscape (SWL) implementation policies on (a) Rangeland Conservation Partnerships, (b) Reserve Common Allotments, (c) Voluntary Allotment Restructuring and Landscape habitat Improvement (i.e. Endangered Species Act mitigation) and;
- In addition, the RAC will receive a summary of public comments received on the Sustaining Working Landscapes policy concepts received in Washington DC and from the 24 workshops held throughout the west and in Washington, D.C.,

B. Subcommittee Meeting:

This morning the S&G working group met and reviewed an advanced copy of the timeline and schedule for completion of the draft (SWL) policies. The S&G working group agreed that each RAC member should send by mail or Email their comments to Lamar Smith. The S&G working group also agreed that a meeting date should be scheduled in August to review members' comments and recommendation and gather information on SWL policy. The meeting date is scheduled for August 22, 2003 at 10:00 a.m. at the National Training Center. I will help facilitate the working group meeting.

C. Important timeline dates and actions for completing the comment period: (see SWL time hand out)

1. **July 14, 2003:** The State Office will send the draft SWL policy and summary of public comments to each Resource Advisory Council member. The State Director will ask each member to send in his or her comments to a designated S&G working group member (Lamar or Frances) before the August workgroup meeting. (See number 10 on your timeline)
2. **July 14, 2003:** State Office initiates a review by State and Field Offices of preliminary draft.
3. **July 18, 2003:** Public affairs will send letter to all stakeholders, including Tribes, and interested members of the public inviting their written comments and participation at upcoming RAC meeting on September 17th. (See number 12, 13, & 14)
4. **August 22, 2003:** The S&G working group will review the RAC member comments on the draft policy and develop recommendations in preparation for the RAC meeting on September 17, 2003.

5. **September 17, 2003:** The RAC will meet, receive public comment, discuss the draft SWL policy, and provides advice to the State Director on SWL policies. (See number 16)
6. **September 19, to October 10, 2003:** The State Office will prepare a package for WO 220:
 - a. RAC advice and recommendations regarding the draft SWL policies
 - b. Consolidated set of public comments, emails and letters; and
 - c. Consolidated set of comments or recommendations for FO and SO.

The changes under consideration, some of which would require regulatory revision for implementation while others would not, would put into action the Secretary's "Four C" principles: consultation, communication, and cooperation, all in the service of conservation. The Secretary and the Director are convinced that this type of citizen-based stewardship will benefit not only BLM's grazing permittees, but also all who use, enjoy, and care about our nation's public lands.

DISCUSSION:

Lamar Smith: If the RAC gives their comments to me, then at the September 17th RAC meeting we will hear from the public. What is the RAC going to do about the public comment other than listen to it? What if the public comment is not consistent with our recommendations?

Bill Coulloudon: We will take the public comments, summarize them and send them to Washington, D.C. We can make adjustments to the recommendations.

Norm Wallen: The main point of all of this is to get public input into the process.

Lamar Smith: We have to have time to discuss this more. We don't usually have time allocated at RAC meetings to discuss this.

Deborah Stevens: We will plan time for this at the September meeting. You can add the additional recommendations that are outside of the RAC's position. We are talking about this taking up most of the meeting, which was requested by Washington, D.C.

Bill Coulloudon: There will be an email address for all of the stakeholders to send comments. We are sending the information to the Sierra Club, etc. The people at the next RAC meeting will have time to provide their comments.

Norm Wallen: I think it is essential that we have time to deal with this. At the Standards & Guidelines meeting will we have time to deal with the public comments?

Bill Coulloudon: You will have a summary of all the comments that the BLM received at the 24 workshops. You will have an opportunity to see comments from various states.

Deborah Stevens: This is another way to obtain comments and send them to Washington, D.C. If you don't receive many comments from the public, you may go with the recommendations of the RAC. I will be sending out a letter and comment sheet to the stakeholders.

Bill Coulloudon: We are going to all of the field offices and asking them to send a comment page to all permittees. We will summarize the permit group comments and send them to the State Office.

Norm Wallen: Is this version more specific to the last one?

Bill Coulloudon: Yes

Norm Wallen: I am concerned that we will have enough time to deal with this in one day.

Glenn Collins: I like the term sustaining working landscapes. This has potential beyond just grazing. I think one of the objectives of this administration has been accomplished by getting the name sustaining working landscapes out there. It seems to me that we could also comment that you have a sustaining working landscape nomenclature that might involved everything from OHV to foresters to miners, etc. Maybe there is an opportunity here to ask the BLM to carry this further.

Steve Saway: This all flows from the Secretaries initiative. Is the Forest Service going to do the same thing? Will this be done as a Federal initiative?

Elaine Zielinski: We have been coordinating with the Forest Service at the Washington, D.C. level.

Bill Coulloudon: The goal is for citizen-based stewardship. If you look at this draft policy, you will see a lot of this. This is a tool to allow individuals to work together.

Elaine Zielinski: We can find out from Washington, D.C. how much coordination has been done with the Forest Service. We always try to coordinate together.

Lamar Smith: You could promote this concept with the Southwest.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Update on Wilderness Lawsuit Settlement and Policy Revisions (Ken Mahoney, Wilderness Management Specialist)

I know you discussed this subject at the last RAC meeting; hopefully there is additional information that I can provide today.

In the mid 1990s, there was back and forth discussion among politicians over wilderness inventory issues in Utah. At the time, Secretary Babbitt thought another way to resolve the issue was to take another look at the Utah wilderness inventory. The State of Utah, State School Trust Lands, Utah Association of Counties, all filed a suit against then-Secretary Babbitt challenging the BLM's inventory of public lands for wilderness.

Earlier this year, the State of Utah amended their lawsuit. The Department settled the lawsuit out of court in April. The essence of what was settled upon was that BLM would not recognize the inventory that had taken place in Utah in the mid 1990's and that a few other conditions relative to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act needed to be clarified. One provision that came out of this was the BLM's authority to conduct wilderness inventory and study under Section 603 had expired in 1993. It was very clear in the law that BLM was under a timeframe to complete the Section 603 Wilderness Review by 1993. The further affect of this settlement was that BLM would no longer establish wilderness study areas (WSAs) after the inventory and study process.

One other thing that the Secretary agreed to in the settlement was that the existing policy that relates to wilderness inventory and study will be pulled back. The "Wilderness Inventory and Study Procedures Handbook" (H-6310-1) has been rescinded through normal procedures and is no longer to be used as guidance.

Since 1993, there have been some wilderness study areas established in other states. Colorado has a few. But the settlement is forward-looking. The idea is that those were established through an open and public involved land-use planning process. Those WSAs established outside of Section 603 up to now will be recognized.

BLM will still be applying the non-impairment standard under Section 603 through the Interim Management Policy (IMP) for protecting established wilderness study areas on public lands, but as a result of the settlement, the IMP will not be used in the future to protect wilderness values.

In Arizona, we have 47 established wilderness areas and they are not affected at all by this settlement. The Congress released all wilderness study areas that were established under Section 603 in Arizona. There were a number of wilderness study areas released in the Arizona Strip in 1984, and in the rest of the state in 1990.

BLM still retains authority to inventory lands. The characteristics that make or compose a wilderness are defined in the Wilderness Act of 1964 Section 2C. The other issue to consider is the protection of values as it relates to wilderness characteristics. As an agency, BLM has the ability to protect these values through the land-use planning process. These methods are identified through public involvement and applied to the areas to be protected having these values. Some of these protection methods may include identifying Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) zones and management prescriptions, establishing Visual Resource Management (VRM) classes, and open and closed vehicle routes through travel management planning.

DISCUSSION:

Steve Saway: During the land use planning (LUP) process, why couldn't you use this as a reference? It should still have some value.

Ken Mahoney: We have been told not to use this handbook.

Steve Saway: So you have to go back to the Wilderness Act of 1964?

Ken Mahoney: The Wilderness Act of 64 still has Section 2C wilderness characteristics.

Norm Wallen: What does this mean for land management?

Ken Mahoney: Presuming that we know we still have the authority to inventory and identify these characteristics, one of the necessary pieces of guidance coming out should be an explanation or policy interpretation of the lawsuit that will provide the key points that were agreed upon in the settlement. While the lawsuit took place in Utah and is legally binding only in Utah, it will be followed by all of BLM. A third memorandum being worked on is project specific guidance relating to how we evaluate proposals through NEPA. How will we deal with the planning efforts now? We are moving forward to an alternative development. The Arizona Strip held public meetings last month. The Phoenix Field Office has been working with alternatives most of the week, and Lake Havasu has too. We need to move ahead in how we will deal with this. We have received citizen proposals from the Arizona Wilderness Coalition. We also have the obligation to look at this information that has been provided to us. This is still in the tentative stages, but we are talking with the field offices and are looking at tools that are already in place for the planning process that can give us some protection. In the process, we are addressing travel management regarding which roads will be open or closed. It is clear that we will not be calling areas wilderness study areas. We will not be establishing special designations.

Norm Wallen: What definition of roads are you working with?

Ken Mahoney: The definition of a road comes from the house report on one of the bills. The house report still stands and it defines what a road is and what a way is.

Sanford Cohen: Regarding the areas identified as having wilderness characteristics; during that time they would be managed for multiple use or is there a conveyance of protective quality?

Ken Mahoney: I don't see that there will be a standard protection that will be identified. Those decisions are entirely up to the planning process. There is in designated wilderness a continuation of multiple uses (example: grazing). There will be various multiple-use activities, but perhaps some will be litigated. All of the ACEC's have specific boundaries.

Sanford Cohen: Can the ACEC's be established through executive level?

Ken Mahoney: I don't believe so.

Norm Wallen: Is it correct that the deletion of the handbook was a part of the settlement?

Ken Mahoney: Yes, it was decided that it was legally flawed and should be discontinued.

Jason Williams (Arizona Wilderness Coalition): The handbook gave the public specific direction.

Norm Wallen: Maybe this should be a future agenda item, unless the RAC wants to deal with this today.

Deborah Stevens: You could consider doing something for the next RAC meeting.

Norm Wallen: I motion that the RAC express their opinion on the unhappiness for this book being withdrawn.

Steve Saway: I second the motion.

Frances Werner: It is my understanding that there will be another book coming out.

Lamar Smith: You have eliminated the public input. I cannot support your motion at all.

Sanford Cohen: Example: The current Planning effort for the Agua Fria National Monument. If a citizen wanted to come forward with a proposal they would say that this is a proposed wilderness study area. With the absence of these materials, what would be the process for citizen comments?

Ken Mahoney: We receive these as comments and information provided to us. I would say that they enter into our consideration in the LUP process.

Sanford Cohen: The ability to provide input by the public is still in place?

Ken Mahoney: Yes

Sanford Cohen: I will second Lamar Smith's opposition to the motion.

Glenn Collins: Can you still use the word wilderness in designating?

Ken Mahoney: There has been no guidance to say that you have or have not identified wilderness characteristics. We have not been given this direction.

Elaine Zielinski: I could say that wilderness characteristics as mentioned are in the law. This is not going to change. I don't see us eliminating this at all in our planning processes. We are in a bind because we are still waiting for more specifics. This was done at a national level. We are using the Arizona Wilderness Coalition in the planning process. The public can use whatever they want to use. The bottom line for us is we can't designate the WSA's through the planning process. There are other tools that we can use to protect these lands. If you were proposing an action that is not consistent with your LUP, you still have to go through a planning process before the action can take place. We are still looking at all of the public input in this process.

Mike Taylor: We still have an R&P process to make management decisions. There are values identified through the planning process that need to be managed in the planning process. The process is there except we will not use WSA's and we will not use the handbook.

Steve Saway: This RAC has expressed interest in citizen proposals and input.

Frances Werner: I agree with Steve that today may be premature in sending a letter.

Bill Branam: I would like to ask Jason Williams from the Arizona Wilderness Coalition how he feels about this discussion?

Jason Williams: The handbook provided protection in the interim. Our volunteers have spent days, weeks, and hours inventorying lands. This does not go with the four C's of the Secretary. We can adjust the boundary as long as the wilderness designations exist.

Mike Taylor: We understand what you're saying. We have something that has changed how we do things, but I hope that the work we have been doing together will continue. There are other planning processes allowed for management. I hope that your group continues to participate in the planning process even though you don't have the opportunity that you previously had.

Jason Williams: We plan to continue to stay involved.

Bill Branam: Maybe we should table this until the next meeting and maybe Norm Wallen could draft a letter to the State Director.

Norm Wallen: I have a high level of trust in the Arizona BLM. I'm not sure a letter would be productive. I am not interested in composing a letter at this time. I am prepared to withdraw the motion and wait to see what happens.

Bill Branam: Seconded the motion

Mike Taylor: Would it please the RAC to continue giving you updates on this? Should this be a standing item for RAC updates?

Frances Werner: It would be helpful to be in the State Director's report.

Lamar Smith: Things cannot be changed without significant public input. This is a valid concern.

Lee Aitken: Citizens organizations are concerned with protecting wilderness areas.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Public Comment Period

Jason Williams of The Arizona Wilderness Coalition: The Arizona Wilderness Coalition thought that the handbook being discussed was a great handbook. It was really exciting that it gave the public direction on how to inventory an area. The removal of this handbook is a slap in the face to a citizen group that has worked so hard to put together proposals. It is taking away the ability for citizens to participate in the process. Specifically, in Arizona the concern is population growth and more protection. We are advocating right now for another two million acres be added to the BLM lands for wilderness. We are not advocating closure of all BLM lands and make them wilderness areas. There are roads out there that all qualify for the road list. I ask the RAC to express concern on why this handbook has been withdrawn. Thank you for your time.

DISCUSSION: N/A

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM:**1. Land and Water Conservation Fund Acquisitions****2. Arizona Land Tenure Adjustment Strategy**

(Michael Taylor, Deputy State Director for Resources)

Several of you may remember that one year ago we talked about coming up with a strategy in Arizona for land tenure adjustments. Many of you know BLM has been successful over the decades in requiring critically identified properties, Agua Fria National Monument, San Pedro, etc. This has been done for important environmental reasons. We have an ongoing exchange program. Kingman has repositioned land in the checkerboard status with the railroad. Those are difficult to manage. At times, we have changed a lot through the State of Arizona. A lot of issues are state land issues in how state land is used when it is trapped within a monument. We are looking at and presented to the State Leadership Team (SLT) at the last meeting a concept of being strategic in land tenure adjustments. What we presented to the SLT was basically to ask that we put together a group and ask the RAC to participate in the development of this strategy. This would be a five-year plan similar to what we ended up with in the Wild Horse & Burro plan on where we are going in land tenure adjustments. It is looked at in a strategic manner where we can go through a prioritization process. What is the best tool to use to make this happen? We need to have a plan to help budget accomplish this. How do we acquire monies for our lands program? We are talking about integrating all of these acquisition actions or land tenure adjustment proposals that project out for five years. A lot of people that do land and water conservation fund acquisitions are those that work on land donations, land sales, etc. We would like the support and involvement of the RAC. I envision that this strategy needs to look at the BLM needs first; and we have lots of involvement with the State Lands Department, Federal agencies, etc. We need to first take care of BLM. The next level would be to look outside the ranks of the BLM. Hopefully, when we get this going we can build strategies in a bigger way.

DISCUSSION:

Steve Saway: This will give you a good opportunity. When there are land exchanges, for example Phelps Dodge, you can target areas where you would like them to have the ability to exchange with BLM.

Mike Taylor: This was done by looking at the land itself to achieve land tenure adjustment for us. In 1991 or 1992, we set up a steering committee of the Field Managers for items to discuss. We are proposing to extend this to all Field Offices. We will have a form for discussion and recommendations to the State Director.

Norm Wallen: Could you remind us of the exchange limitations?

Mike Taylor: Exchanges have become difficult over the last couple of years because of things that have happened (appraisal issues). They are more difficult to do now. There are other tools to utilize other than exchanges. The Federal Lands Transaction Facilitation Act will be the tool of the future. Example: BLM lands available for disposal you take the monies and purchase property. Again, there are other tools and there are a lot of limitations. There are several levels of review that have to take place. The Deputy Director has to sign off on any land exchanges. There is a national exchange team that has to review the exchange.

Elaine Zielinski: The other constraint is the Arizona law.

Mike Taylor: It is different than other states in regard to working with the State of Arizona.

Bill Branan: How does it work with exchanges between counties?

Mike Taylor: Mojave County would like to see more private property on their tax roles. They don't see more acquisition, but they would like to see less public land. We are trying to outline a fair and logical process.

Sandee McCullen: Education to the people is the number one priority. A lot of this is due to the lack of the public being informed.

Sanford Cohen: Would it be helpful to have someone advise you of exchanges available? For example, someone responsible for Phoenix North, Phoenix South, etc?

Mike Taylor: Yes, this would be helpful. However you would like us to accomplish this. We will continue to do lands work. We have people approaching us daily with ideas. If you have a plan, then you can deal with it.

Frances Werner: What is the status of the Babbitt/Diamond?

Shela McFarlin: The property that they want is on Sahurita Road and the value keeps increasing. We are looking at 18-19 parcels that they can include in the exchange. They are talking to willing sellers who have the property that we are interested in acquiring. It's a big exchange that is being worked on.

Mary Dahl: There are city and county plans out there that may address their needs to grow by seeing some Federal land going into private lands.

Mike Taylor: It's more efficient and a better way of doing work is to prioritize. Bill Ruddick will be the team lead. The Field Office Managers are submitting names. If there is anyone on the RAC that wants to be involved, please let me know.

Deborah Stevens: Frances, Steve Saway, Glenn Collins and Rick Holloway

Mike Taylor: Land & Water Conservation Acquisitions (LWCA) Status Report: We have an active LWCA program here in Arizona and have been successful in receiving funding. Congressman Kolbe has been a big help with the San Pedro. We have a lot of money allocated for acquisition in the San Pedro area. We have devoted some Arizona State Office people to work on the project to acquire properties from a water conservation standpoint. Some of the important properties being focused on are properties of higher value. Working on acquisitions of Anderson property (pending appraisal), Lee Property (pending appraisal), McIntyre Property and San Pedro. There are a number of properties being acquired by the Department of Defense, and they will be donated to the BLM. We are acquiring the Anderson property from Arizona Game & Fish. We have a number of properties that we are working on in the wilderness areas of the State of Arizona.

Steve Saway: When you acquire properties do you also acquire water rights?

Mike Taylor: It depends on the goal for the acquisition. In the case of the San Pedro, it is water or riparian areas. Sometimes you cannot acquire all the rights of a property.

Steve Saway: Is the budget level?

Mike Taylor: We have budget peaks and valleys. You have to perform to receive the money. LWCF funds are carried over from year to year. Our fund was borrowed from for fires. We were paid back but were paid back with some funds missing.

Elaine Zielinski: LWCF in general is declining. One of Secretary Norton's policy statements was that we don't have a lot of funds to manage what lands we are carrying now.

Mike Taylor: We're talking about how to better manage the existing lands that we have by repositioning funds.

Glenn Collins: There needs to be documentation that when we acquire land for a preservation purpose we don't have to open it up to all land uses.

Deborah Stevens: Do you want to bring up appraisals for the organization?

Mike Taylor: There were some concerns over exchanges in the past and most evolved around appraisal issues. The Bureau asked the appraisal foundation to do a report on our appraisal process. They came out with a report, which is not what we expected to come out. They had very strong feelings of what was happening with the appraisal process with BLM and other agencies. We had appraisers meet from all over and they produced a report back to the Director. The range of options came back narrow on the appraisal side. We were told that there should be a separation of appraisal functions. The statement has been that the DOI appraisal functions will be set aside, and the appraisal functions are to be determined. The lands in the San Pedro ecosystem area need to be communicated to you better. The protection of the San Pedro watershed should be protected.

Lamar Smith: There hasn't been any adequate groundwork for this. The local people read this in the newspaper afterwards. This needs to be discussed with the public before the land is acquired.

Mike Taylor: Your points are noted.

Shela McFarlin: A lot of these land ownership conservation easements are extremely difficult. We can do a general briefing. We will be revising the San Pedro plan next year.

Mike Taylor: We can have an overall general discussion on the areas that we are looking at. If you all want to know specifically on particular tracts, please let us know. We need everyone to be kept informed.

Lamar Smith: You're dealing with taxpayer monies.

Elaine Zielinski: You bring up some good points. We can do a better job of communicating. This plan, hopefully, will give you a lot more information statewide as to what are our priorities. Frankly, the land tenure adjustment process, besides being complicated, is one of the most interesting because we have people approaching us daily with deals. Our FMO's are sharing as much as they can and we will make a better effort with communicating to you.

Lamar Smith: If you are using public monies, you are affecting everyone. I think there is an obligation to keep people informed on what you're doing.

Mike Taylor: When we go in and go for an acquisition there is a checklist to use. The San Pedro plan was created with public knowledge. We will do a better job of communicating.

Lamar Smith: I agree with the Secretary that you need to manage with what you have.

Norm Wallen: Where does the LWCF money come from?

Don Charpio: Offshore oil leases.

Bill Branen: I like the fund. I would like to see the fund buy down allotments where there are issues in wilderness areas.

Mike Taylor: That is not a federally recognized value.

Bill Branen: I am always looking for a way for everyone to be happy.

Shela McFarlin: For the Las Cienegas RRT we had 19 applications. We have selected 11 people and alternates. We are in the process of contacting these individuals.

Frances Werner: The decision was that you would write these out and send them to Lamar Smith.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: BLM Field Managers Field Office Rangeland Resource Team Member Proposals

DISCUSSION: No proposals were forwarded.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Reports from BLM Field Managers

Arizona Strip Field Office Manager Report
June 27, 2003

1. SUBJECT: Arizona Strip public planning meetings

ISSUE SUMMARY: During the first week of June, the Arizona Strip Field Office held five open houses to gather public comment regarding preliminary management alternatives covering the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument, Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, and the 1.7 million acres of non-monument BLM land on the Arizona Strip. A total of 349 people attended the meetings, which were held in Mesquite, St. George, Fredonia, Kingman and Flagstaff. Planners heard a wide-range of comments covering OHV, ranching, hunting, wilderness, etc. Public comment will be taken on the draft preliminary alternatives until July 7. Planners will then flesh-out the alternatives, prepare a draft environmental impact statement, select a preferred alternative, and hold another series of public meetings next spring.

2. SUBJECT: Arizona Strip Student Crew

ISSUE SUMMARY: For the 11th summer in a row, the Arizona Strip Student Crew is busy building fence, fixing catchments and picking up litter on the Arizona Strip. Eight students from local high schools who expressed interest natural resource careers were selected for the summer crew. A number of student crew graduates move on to become fire fighters.

Kingman Field Manager Report
July 2, 2003

1: Subject: Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Reintroduction and Supplemental Releases of Desert Bighorn Sheep in Mohave, Yavapai, Coconino, and La Paz Counties

Issue Summary: In June of 2003, an appeal was received from the Animal Defense League of Arizona/Mountain Lion Foundation in June 2003 on the decision for the *Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Reintroduction and Supplemental Releases of Desert Bighorn Sheep in Mohave, Yavapai, Coconino, and La Paz Counties, Environmental Assessment No. AZ-030-2001-0035*.

The main points of appeal are 1) inadequate evaluation of the impacts of capture, 2) predator control, 3) water developments, and 4) impacts on wilderness users. The Appellants also claim the EA failed to justify the purpose and need for the action, failed to evaluate a full range of reasonable alternatives, segmented the analysis, and that an EIS is required for this action.

BLM is developing the agency response to this appeal and is preparing a copy of the case file for the IBLA and the BLM Solicitor. This information is due to IBLA by the end of July 2003.

The BLM and AGFD met with the Animal Defense League of Arizona/Mountain Lion Foundation prior to the issuing of the Decision Record. Information exchanged at this meeting and consideration of their comment letter resulted in a clarification of their issues and substantial modifications to the existing EA.

2: Subject: Kingman Field Office, New Building

BLM has signed off on the final floor plans. The new building will be located on Hualapai Mountain Road and Mission Blvd. (name changed from Slaughterhouse Road). Construction should begin at any time. If all goes according to plan, approximate move-in date would be late winter or early spring 2004. Staff is in the process of choosing colors, and organizing the office space along organizational lines.

Lake Havasu Field Manager Report **July 7, 2003**

1. SUBJECT: Lake Havasu Fisheries Improvement Program

ISSUE SUMMARY: As the Lake Havasu Fisheries Improvement Program partnership completes its 10th year of operation, it has remained focused and accomplished primary goals for habitat construction/placement, augmentation of two endangered species populations, and construction of shoreline access fishing facilities. As the lead agency keeping three federal agencies, two state agencies, the private sector and local communities onboard and involved in this program has been a monumental undertaking for the BLM. Since many goals have been achieved, and each partner deals with dwindling fiscal resources, keeping partners involved and contributing has become even more difficult.

On December 5, 2003, program partner U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plans to host a national celebration (inviting the Secretary of the Interior and agency heads) at the Bill Williams River National Wildlife Refuge, commemorating completion of universally accessible fishing facilities at the south end of Lake Havasu. The site is adjacent to the shoreline FWS office, with facilities being constructed on the Central Arizona Project peninsula. Completion of the project involves funding construction costs for docks, fishing piers, restroom, trails, interpretive signing, and highway access improvements. Completion necessitates renewed commitments from all partners and leadership from BLM.

2. SUBJECT: Lake Havasu Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

ISSUE SUMMARY: The Lake Havasu Field Office (LHFO) is in the plan formulation phase of the RMP/EIS process. Potential management scenarios are being developed for four alternatives (the No Action Alternative, Environmental Protection, Consumptive Use, and Balanced Protection). The RMP/EIS planning effort is being completed in-house due to budget constraints. Progress is slow because staff is required to accomplish the RMP/EIS in addition to an existing heavy workload.

Subsequent to receiving an approved budget towards the end of April, LHFO drafted a Scope of Work and Government Cost Estimate for a Writer Editor and the services of an Economist. The contract has not been awarded.

The schedule calls for socio-economics and environmental justice to be completed for the Affected Environment and the Environmental Consequences chapters of the EIS in FY03. This will not be accomplished without additional funds. The draft EIS is scheduled to be complete in April 2004, and the final RMP/EIS in October 2004.

Phoenix Field Office Manager Report

June 27, 2003

1. SUBJECT: Environmental Assessment for Weaver Mountain Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project

ISSUE SUMMARY: The public has an opportunity to comment on an environmental assessment (EA) and the finding of no significant issue (FONSI) for the Weaver Mountain area, about 17 miles north of Wickenburg. The Weaver Mountain project, within the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Bradshaw-Harquahala Resource Management Planning Area, is one of 12 sites identified in President Bush's Healthy Forests Initiative (HFI). After one of the most catastrophic fire seasons in U.S. history, the sites were selected to test strategies for reducing wildfire danger. The Weaver Mountain Fuels Reduction Project is intended to reduce the danger of wildland fires while increasing public and firefighter safety. The public comment period closes on July 8, 2003. Copies will be available at the RAC meeting or contact Teri Raml at 623-580-5602.

2. SUBJECT: Yarnell Fuels Reduction Project

ISSUE SUMMARY: The community fuels reduction project held at the Yarnell Fire department was accomplished by the efforts of the Yarnell and Peoples Valley Volunteer Fire Departments. BLM, Phoenix Field Office provided a roll off dumpster and labor assistance for this project. Yavapai County provided the chipper used to chip the brush from the many community residents that participated. The Yarnell fire department advertised the project and helped the elderly, retired and handicapped residents with assistance in removing and transporting materials to the brush drop-off site at the fire department. Residents were encouraged to take mulch or fire wood from some of the larger materials for their gardens or fireplaces. A 40 yard dumpster was completely filled, which greatly increased the defensible space around many homes in the area.

Safford Field Manager Report

July 10, 2003

Subject: Klump Grazing Trespass

Issue Summary: On June 2, 2003, a status hearing was held in United States District Court in Tucson on rancher Barry Klump's compliance with the Court's April 21 bench order. Mr. Barry Klump indicated that he has removed a substantial number of livestock from the Badger Den allotment since the April hearing, and pledged to remove his remaining livestock from both the

Badger Den and Simmons Peak allotments within two weeks. He will not, however, remove livestock that belong to his father, Luther Wallace Klump, from either allotment. Luther Klump remains in the custody of the U.S. Marshal's Office in Tucson for his failure to remove trespass livestock.

Subject: Prescribed Burns

Issue Summary: The Safford-Tucson Fire Management Zone completed several prescribed fires in June. Work in the Safford Field Office included three burns in the tablelands surrounding Aravaipa Canyon in Pinal County. Perimeter control lines were burned on the ground on June 3-7 then, on June 10, the interiors of all three were aerially ignited. The combined acres for the PZ, Javelina, and Turkey Creek burns totaled 11,286. The burns will reduce brush, increase grass cover, enhance wildlife habitat, and improve the watershed. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) assisted with the Turkey Creek burn by providing firefighters and equipment. Safford's on-call seasonal firefighters, the Sapotistas, also helped with that burn. Work in the Tucson Field Office included two burn units along the San Pedro River for a total of 200 acres.

Subject: Southeastern Arizona Internship Program

Issue Summary: Six students from the Southeastern Arizona Cultural Internship Program arrived at the Safford Field Office (SFO) on June 23 to begin the fourth week of the month-long program. Managers and resource specialists provided an overview of what the BLM does and the types of careers available. The week was full of learning opportunities, working with BLM staff in the field. Interns took measurements in local water sources such as Bonita Creek. After an overnight stay near Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness, students assisted with campsite cleanups. They helped with a recreation project at Lee Trail in the Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area, and floated part of the Gila Box. The internship program concluded on June 27 with a luncheon, closeout meeting, and awards ceremony at Discovery Park that was attended by parents and program sponsors. The internship program, now in its sixth year, is a partnership between the BLM, City of Safford, Graham County, Phelps Dodge Corporation, and San Carlos Apache Tribe. Interns spent their first week with the City/County, the second week with Phelps Dodge, and the third week at San Carlos. Each intern received a \$600 stipend and a \$500 college scholarship.

Subject: San Simon Watershed Restoration

Issue Summary: Safford Field Office Force Account personnel completed work on the Upper Dike drop structure on June 25. Designed for erosion control, the structure will ultimately retain over 30 acre-feet of sediment. The project is another phase of the BLM's long-term restoration efforts on the San Simon watershed, located east of Safford.

Tucson Field Office Manager Report
June 27, 2003

1. SUBJECT: Ironwood Forest National Monument planning

ISSUES: The RFPs (request for proposals) are scheduled to advertise to potential contractors on Friday, June 27. Bidders will be required to have their bids in to the Federal Service Center by COB on Friday, July 11. An evaluation team composed of Tony Herrell, Larry Shults, and Darrel Tersey will travel to Denver on July 14 to evaluate the RFPs that are received. A contractor should be selected by the last week in July.

2. SUBJECT: Recreational Target Shooting

ISSUES: The neutral contractor selected for this conflict resolution effort continues to interview major stakeholders prior to writing a summary report. Following the release of the report, public meetings may be organized to receive input on methods that will satisfy the demand for recreational shooting sites, while increasing safety and resource protection.

3. SUBJECT: Middle Gila River Access Project

ISSUES: For the Shores and Christmas recreational access points along the Middle Gila River, the Tucson Field Office received funding to design a new highway access and improve the safety and usability of the sites. ADOT will be designing the highway access change. Tucson Field Office selected Science Applications International Corp (SAIC) to accomplish a cultural survey, environmental assessment and biological evaluation with work beginning by June 30. A public meeting in Winkelman, AZ, was held to get input from the public about which recreational facilities users would like to see in the proposed action. Suggestions included placement of trashcans, restrooms, controlling road erosion and placement of signs.

Yuma Field Office Manager Report
July 1, 2003

1. SUBJECT: Mittry Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan Funded

ISSUE SUMMARY: The Washington Office has approved a funding request for the Mittry Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan totaling \$690,000. The dollars will be spent over the next two years. The plan was created for the Mittry Fire that started on March 13th, and consumed 1,300 acres just north of Mittry Lake. Mittry Lake is situated between the Imperial and Laguna dams on the Lower Colorado River and is cooperatively managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Arizona Game and Fish Department, and Bureau of Reclamation. The emphasis of the plan is on three key actions which are: 1) clearing of invasive species (Tamarisk) in areas where native plant species are most likely to be successful for re-growth, 2) plant cottonwood and willow trees in areas suitable for this type of vegetation, and 3) monitoring for success of the project. Yuma Field Office personnel are currently completing an environmental assessment and contractors are performing an archaeological clearance. There are also two contracts out for solicitation for an implementation team leader and for the plant materials.

2. SUBJECT: Acquisition of Land

ISSUE SUMMARY: On May 30, the Yuma Field Office acquired a 641.92-acre parcel of land in the Gila River Cultural Area of Critical Environmental Concern (Sears Point) from the Anderson Western Corporation. The acreage was acquired with Land and Water Conservation funds. This acquisition helps to further protect the abundant cultural and natural resources in this historically significant area through ownership consolidation.

AGENDA ITEM: RAC Questions on Field Manager Reports (BLM Field Managers)

DISCUSSION:

Shela McFarlin: Deborah Stevens advised me that you are interested in recreational shooting. We engaged the U.S. Institute for Conflict Resolution/Udall Center to interview about 20 individuals or groups to get a sense of what are the issues, and how to go forward with the public. They are trying to understand the issues and how to explore these issues with the public. Their results of the interviews will probably be out in July 2003 and they will be contacting some RAC members. Approximately July 25, 2003, the State Director will sign the Record Of Decision (ROD) of the Las Cienegas plan. In mid August we will be doing an implementation plan.

Lee Aitken: Do you anticipate litigation from the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD)?

Shela McFarlin: We expect it, but they have years to file. The biggest issue of the CBD is grazing.

Elaine Zielinski: I think the Las Cienegas process is being used as a model process throughout the Bureau.

Shela McFarlin: Karen will talk more about this at the August 2 planning partnership meeting.

Frances Werner: Do you know how the Udall Center is selecting the people for interviewing?

Shela McFarlin: The Udall Center created a list of folks and prioritized the people to contact. They may attend gun shows for opinions, etc. This report will be a platform for what we need to do next.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Report from the Standards & Guidelines Working Group (Lamar Smith, Chair)

We will send out the information on the Sustained Working Landscapes. Please send your comments to me. We will come to a consensus, approval or disapproval of the RAC.

DISCUSSION:

Deborah Stevens: Is everyone ok with receiving the documents electronically? Are you ok with downloading and printing the information? This will be a Microsoft Word document.

Lamar Smith: That's fine

Lee Aitken: Your email referred to the attachment, but there wasn't anything there.

Deborah Stevens: Maybe I didn't include the attachment.

Frances Werner: I got it.

Lee Aitken: Mine was blank.

Norm Wallen: I am receiving the information.

ACTION: Information will be sent to the RAC via email.

AGENDA ITEM: RAC Discussion on Public Relations Working Group (Steve Saway, Chair)

We are going to do an outreach on Sustaining Working Landscapes initiative. We are having a meeting here on September 17, 2003 to obtaining public input. This will be coming as a RAC notes item

DISCUSSION:

Deborah Stevens: This will also include in the RAC notes and other opportunities for public comment.

ACTION: N/A**AGENDA ITEM: RAC Discussion on Recreation and Tourism Working Group (Sande McCullen, Chair)**

At our last meeting, Steve Saway and I were asked to look at an OHV letter. By the time we got around to doing the letter our community groups had already contacted the state legislatures. We have had some very good meetings with the state legislators so the issue seems to be handling itself. The funding from the statewide inventory will be coming from the RTP funds. The question coming to me now is will the BLM work across borders to the Forest Service for trail numbering? Do you know where this is going?

DISCUSSION:

Don Charpio: We are committed to working with the Forest Service. The Forest Service has a well-engrained numbering system. The BLM also has a numbering system of their own. We will work with the Forest Service as best we can. I think we will receive different responses from different areas.

Sande McCullen: Coming from the user group, please be consistent. With you being involved with the planning now this is a top priority. The 4WD Association is working with a 5-year programmatic use permit for their annual jamboree. There are some snags, but we are pushing for a situation that will work for both sides. The RAC would like to work with other issues than OHV. With as many members that we have involved with planning efforts across the state this is very important. Anything that we can do to help be a liaison with the users (motorized or non-motorized). We are here to help. I was at a meeting with the Pinal City Supervisors and a comment came up regarding the local economy that the City of Florence approached Sandy Smith from Pinal County saying they wanted Country Thunder to return because the revenue for the City of Florence was huge. They had a difficult time dealing with BLM. The event was on private land. I think we need to get with our communities and be a voice to where the BLM is standing. Recreation and tourism is supporting a lot of these smaller towns. These towns want these economic groups to return, but feel they are being blocked by the BLM.

Mike Taylor: This was the City of Florence?

Sande McCullen: Yes.

Glenn Collins: One of the things that several of the present and formal RAC members have been working on is the Middle Gila Conservation Partnership. We meet in the Florence Town Hall. With a lot of people representing different interests, we have been working on this as a small-town collaborative planning effort for three years. Elaine Zielinski hosted a meeting in the Arizona State Office regarding the MGCP where Elaine and the four leaders of the four land agencies had an opportunity to meet with these leaders to inform them of what we are doing and to obtain their guidance. I think the objective was to let the leaders know what we are doing and thank them for the worker support. The meeting went very well. Each of these four agencies appeared to be pleased that we are doing this and continued to offer support. You need to get the environmental groups more involved. We need to set more priorities about where we are working and what we will get accomplished. Yesterday we had our monthly meeting in the City of Florence and we talked about these issues. We would set up subgroups to continue with the decision tree. A second group would be an outreach group to strengthen the effort to go out and talk to people instead of them having to come to us. A third group would be called something like Natural & Cultural Resource subgroup, which would simultaneously inventory the environmental and cultural resources of the area. Instead of everybody meeting at the same time you break it down into groups, which would meet on a monthly basis. As results develop we will merge together.

DISCUSSION: N/A

ACTION: N/A**AGENDA ITEM: Report from Wild Horse and Burro Working Group (Frances Werner, Chair)**

We have not had a subcommittee meeting. Bill has the statistics that were put together at the last meeting. Please see the WH&B handout.

DISCUSSION:

Bill Grossi: We have adopted 229 animals. The Northeastern Colorado Desert Plan has been finalized and signed. Lake Havasu coordinated with California BLM for the removal of 200 excess burros on the other side of the Colorado River. A census of the Alamo Herd area was begun and we are declaring appropriate management for the area.

Mike Taylor: We offered adopt-a-buddy. After instituting this adopt-a-buddy pilot, if a successful adopter returns after the adoption is over for another animal they may. This increased the adoption level by 25 percent.

Bill Grossi: Regarding the sanctuary for horses in Mexico. That didn't go anywhere because the BLM would lose their span of control.

Frances Werner: The individual that wanted to do that is still giving talks about his project

Lee Aitken: He hasn't given up on this and is always is at the National Horse & Burro meetings.

Don Ellsworth: Regarding the California gathers. California was given funds to remove 500 burros. We were only able to obtain 200+ burros because of the terrain. We will return this summer and try to do some water and bait trapping so the numbers may increase.

Frances Werner: How long since a gather was conducted in that area?

Don Ellsworth: Last year, however, we didn't do as many. Some were mostly from the Parker Strip area on the California side of the Colorado River. Before we did the gather last year the census was 900 head. We haven't done another census since that time. We are working with BLM California to use the same census model. Hopefully, we will do a census on the California side next year.

Frances Werner: There is a new entity called the Wild Horse & Burro Foundation. Mike Taylor will bring more information about this group to the next meeting.

Mike Taylor: Reaching the AMK is a significant accomplishment.

ACTION: N/A**AGENDA ITEM: Report from Planning Working Group (Mary Dahl, Chair)**

These meetings are all about Land Use Plans (LUP).

DISCUSSION:

Teri Raml: The alternatives were not ready for public review last night. We are working with Jones & Stokes as the contractors. We are hopefully on schedule to brief the State Director and the staff, and then we will go into the impact analysis and redo the community meeting. We will look at the impact analysis and suggest an alternative.

Frances Werner: I counted over 40 members of the public in attendance. This was a very interactive group. There were three people there from Castle Hot Springs.

Teri Raml: I appreciate having the RAC members in attendance at the meeting. We need to continue to stress that these meetings are open.

Sandee McCullen: The public was very receptive to the RAC in who they are and what they do. There were a lot of questions answered last night.

Don Charpio: Are we also going to invite the RAC to sit in on the briefing alternatives?

Mary Dahl: I understand that the invitation would be there.

Don Charpio: The RAC will not receive any prior documents, but will be able to attend the briefings. Who is supposed to notify the RAC of dates and times of meetings?

Deborah Stevens: I will notify the RAC.

Don Charpio: This is a very important meeting for us and we would like the RAC members to attend.

Teri Raml: It would be helpful in a future meeting to talk about e-planning pilots. This would be a useful tool for planners to access the information by computer.

Frances Werner: It was mentioned last night that the State of Alaska is using the e-planning process now.

Teri Raml: We will send the link to the RAC. It's not easy to find.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Discussion on Future Meetings and Locations (BLM State Director and RAC Members)

The next RAC meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2003 at the National Training Center in Phoenix.

Early December – In limbo until Don Ellsworth checks the schedule.

DISCUSSION:

Steve Saway: Maybe in the winter season a RAC meeting in Yuma to tour Sears Point (February?).

Lamar Smith: Regarding the September meeting, I don't know how many comments we will receive.

Steve Saway: I don't think it will be a long session.

Lamar Smith: We want the RAC to consider the comments that are being made.

Deborah Stevens: When you receive your comments you may provide them to the constituencies to obtain more comments to gather from the outside. I think the State Director and BLM know what to expect because the workshops that we conducted did not bring a lot of participation.

Norm Wallen: How much time is allocated to the meeting?

Deborah Stevens: The Washington office states that we should focus half of the meeting to this subject.

Sandee McCullen: Lamar Smith, do you think with the August 15 deadline for getting information returned to us that we wouldn't have enough feedback?

Frances Werner: The people can come physically if they choose.

Deborah Stevens: There may be some updates that the State Director can cover as a standing item. It doesn't have to be a full-day meeting.

Frances Werner: If there is a budget meeting, this could be done on paper. When do you anticipate involving the RAC in the budget process?

Elaine Zielinski: Within the next three months you should be receiving some material.

Steve Saway: Will the September 17, 2003 meeting involve only Sustaining Working Landscapes?

Deborah Stevens: Yes, mostly.

Lamar Smith: Why hasn't a representative from the Governor's office attended a RAC meeting?

Deborah Stevens: We met with Lori Faeth of the Governor's office on the call for RAC nominations. Lori Faeth said she would request that someone from the State Land Department attend the next RAC meeting.

Mike Taylor: She gave us some assurances that she would attend.

Lamar Smith: As a resident of the State of Arizona, I feel that the State should be represented at the RAC meetings.

Frances Werner: The State Land Departments image is grazing. Do they understand that there are more issues than just grazing?

Mike Taylor: We discussed with them in detail the different groups in the RAC.

Elaine Zielinski: I am meeting with Lori Faeth at the end of the month and will mention upcoming meetings. It would be nice if the RAC to write a short note telling them that we are looking forward to their participation in the RAC.

Glenn Collins: The RAC members are here because of the Governor's appointment.

ACTION:

Frances Werner: I will send a letter to the Governor's office when have dates of upcoming meetings.

Lamar Smith: moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Frances Werner. – MEETING ADJOURNED